

REMARKS

Claims 1, 20, 26, 38, 46, 51, 56 and 78 are amended, claims 44 and 58-61 are canceled, and new claims 79-81 are added. Hence, Claims 1-61 and 78-81 are all the claims pending in the application. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute the claims amended here, as originally filed, as well as the canceled claims, in a continuation application.

Claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11, 13-23, 25, 46-53, 55-61 and 78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,754,317 to Berthoud et al. (hereinafter “Berthoud”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,104,799 to Jain et al. (hereinafter “Jain”). Applicant respectfully submits that the Berthoud/Jain combination does not render the claims unpatentable since the combination does not contain all the limitations of the claims. In particular, the Berthoud/Jain combination does not send a request for a person’s preferred point of contact information in which the request contains not only at least a portion of the universal point of contact identifier identifying the person, but also a contact type identifier identifying a type of contact requested.

Claim 1, for example, is directed to a method for contacting a person using a universal point of contact identifier. The method includes locating, based on the universal point of contact identifier, a plurality of point of contact information for contacting the person. For example, if the universal point of contact identifier is an email address, the method can use the domain name portion of the email address and domain name services (DNS) to locate a server that controls the repository where the plurality of point of contact information is stored. Once the point of contact information is located, a request is sent for the person’s preferred point of contact information. The request includes a contact type identifier that identifies the type of contact requested, such as

a voice call or a facsimile. See Fig. 4, for example, which shows various types of contacts (e.g., voice, fax, email, postal). A communication session that is consistent with the type of contact indicated by the contact type identifier is then automatically established.

According to the Office Action, Berthoud teaches a universal point of contact identifier (an email address), and information sources that contain contact information for the intended recipient. However, Berthoud does not teach or suggest sending any specific “request for the person’s preferred point of contact information,” much less a request that includes “a contact type identifier identifying a type of contact requested,” as recited in claim 1.

Rather, Berthoud merely discloses, at col. 3, lines 10-17, as cited in the Office Action, that:

Connection destination information may be determined from the email address using a database or series of databases located at the central telephone office 32, internet service provider 54, or at several different locations connected by a network 56. For example, prior to placing the call, connection destination information for an intended recipient may be gathered by accessing a series of information sources available over the Internet 55.

Berthoud also discloses at col. 4, lines 15-21, that:

The email address thus received is used to determine at least one connection destination associated with the email address (block 114). As noted, a database or series of databases provided by a local TSP 32 or by an ISP 54 may be used, as well as any number of information sources available over the internet 55 or other communications network or series of networks.

However, Berthoud does not teach or suggest in either of these portions of the reference or elsewhere, using a contact type identifier.

Berthoud is cited for disclosing all the elements of claim 1 except for choosing a preferred contact number. Jain is cited to satisfy that deficiency in Berthoud. Jain relates to

using a customer profile database during a call setup process, to obtain calling numbers associated with the customer. See Abstract and col. 1, line 54 to col. 2, line 15. However, even if Berthoud were modified based on the teachings of Jain as asserted in the Office Action, the combination would not satisfy all the limitations of the claim since the combination would not send a request with “a contact type identifier identifying a type of contact requested,” as recited in claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the Berthoud/Jain combination does not render claim 1 unpatentable. Independent claims 20, 26, 38, 46, 51, 56 and 78 are amended to recite a contact type identifier and hence, are patentable over the Berthoud/Jain combination for at least the same reasons.

The remaining claims depend from one of the independent claims discussed above, and hence, are patentable over the asserted combination for at least the same reasons.

New claim 79 is added, which specifies that the plurality of point of contact information is located “by using Domain Name Services (DNS) with the universal point of contact identifier to resolve an address of a server controlling the repository containing the plurality of point of contact information.” It is respectfully submitted that neither Berthoud nor Jain discloses this feature, and hence, claim 79 is patentable also for this reason.

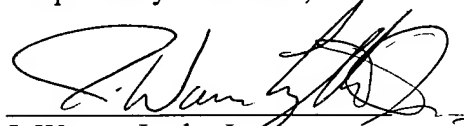
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
Application Number: 09/873,433

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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